



STATE OF WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Insurance Building, PO Box 43113 • Olympia, Washington 98504-3113 • (360) 902-0555

October 23, 2003

TO: Rex Derr, Director
Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

FROM: Marty Brown, Director

SUBJECT: Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission Incident Report #03-12
Does Not Merit Review

Pursuant to RCW 43.41.370 and the Guidelines for Reporting Incidents, the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission (Parks) reported to the Office of Financial Management (OFM) that on November 13, 2002, a 37-year-old hiker fell to her death at Deception Pass State Park.

Rita Willman of Oak Harbor was hiking with her husband and daughter when she fell 200 feet down a rocky cliff and into the water. She suffered severe trauma to the head and torso. Her body was recovered from the water by a fire department boat. The area in which the family was hiking when the accident occurred is one that Parks does not advertise or sign as a maintained trail because of its steepness and danger. Parks has now closed the trail where this incident occurred and erected additional warning signs.

RCW 43.41.370(1) requires the Director of OFM to appoint a loss prevention review team when the death of a person, serious injury to a person, or other substantial loss is alleged or suspected to be caused at least in part by the actions of a state agency unless the Director, in his discretion, determines that the incident "does not merit review". Applying the criteria for loss prevention reviews, issued November 18, 2002, I have determined this incident does not merit review. While a fatality did occur in the park, it happened in a location not intended for public use. Parks staff have visited the site of the incident to observe the conditions there and have taken action to avoid future incidents of a similar kind. This is an appropriate agency response, and an additional review is unnecessary at this time.

This decision will be posted on the OFM website. If you have any questions about the criteria or its application to this incident, please contact either Susan Hettinger at (360) 902-9815 or Gary Robinson at (360) 902-0528.

cc: Valoria Evans